

**BERC chairman's appointment illegal: HC**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court has declared the appointment of Syed Yusuf Hossain as chairman of Bangladesh Energy Regulatory Commission (BERC), and his holding this office illegal and unconstitutional.

An HC bench delivered the judgement on Thursday following on a writ petition that challenged the legality of the appointment of Syed Yusuf Hossain, a former comptroller and auditor general (CAG) of the country, and his holding the office of BERC chairman. The bench of Justice Nozrul Islam Chowdhury and Justice Naima Haider came up with the verdict observing that Syed Yusuf Hossain, who earlier held the post of CAG, which is constitutional post, was not eligible for the office of BERC chairman, since this office is service in the republic.

Petitioner's counsel Advocate Dr Shahdeen Malik told The Daily Star that he expected Syed Yusuf Hossain to stop all his activities and using any privilege and remuneration chairman of BERC from February 24 following the HC verdict.

Syed Yusuf Hossain was appointed chairman of BERC for three years on October 11, 2009, and he joined the office on October 13 of that year. Taslim Uddin Ahmed, chairman of private organisation Law and Development Bangladesh, later in that month filed the writ petition as public interest litigation challenging the legality of the appointment of Yusuf. Barrister M Amir-Ul Islam appeared for Yusuf.



Dr Pallavi Shah, president of International Inner Wheel, lights a candle at the inaugural ceremony of the 26th Conference of Inner Wheel District 328 at Hotel Westin in the city yesterday. Also in picture are District Chairman Tahera Muzaffar, Sophia Kabir, Dr Mazurul Hoque Choudhury, Dilruba Ahmed, and Akter Jahan.

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**Dhaka to pass on six proposals to Delhi**

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, NEW DELHI

Bangladesh will hand over to India next week six proposals relating mainly to its transport sector for utilisation of the one billion dollar credit line, Finance Minister AMA Muhit said here yesterday.

He said ten proposals have already been finalised and forwarded to the finance ministry, out of which six will be handed over to India in a week's time.

Replying to a question from a select group of journalists here that there has been some anxiety in Indian officialdom about Bangladesh not coming up with the projects to utilise the Indian credit line, the biggest single dose of foreign assistance by India, Muhit said, "Yes, it has taken some time to finalise the proposals because everything has to go through the procedure and because it involves different ministries and

the approval of the planning commission." India had announced the credit line during Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's visit to India in January 2010.

He said in all 22 to 25 proposals are under the consideration of the Bangladesh government and of them 19 entailing a total of 858 million dollars were under preparation.

The bigger proposals need preparation and they will come up later. But six proposals already finalised will be given to India in a week's time".

He said the six proposals to be given to India next week are mainly in rail and road sectors including purchase of rail engines, coaches, and rolling stock, and one is in power sector which is already under implementation.

Muhit, who was here to attend a South Asian conference, is expected to meet Indian Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee today.

**Spl allocation for poor farmers urged**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Some agriculturists and NGO activists yesterday demanded special budgetary allocation for marginal and ultra-poor farmers to accelerate their agricultural productivity.

They also urged the government to formulate a comprehensive policy to reform the country's agricultural sector for its betterment.

They made the call at a view-exchange meeting jointly organised by Nagorik Sanghati, Campaign for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods (CSRL), and Karmojibi Nari at Mukti Bhaban in the city.

Agriculture scientist Dr Gool Hossain demanded the government's stimulus package for group farming rather than individual farming for better production.

Dr Sharminddo Nilormi, associate professor of economics of Jahangirnagar University, said development of agriculture-based industries will bring good for both farmers and agriculture. In the chair, CSRL member secretary Ziaul Haque Mukta recommended making the Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) more active and allocation for agriculture research.

Bangladesh Khet-Majur Samity president Shamsuzzaman Selim, Nagorik Uddyog general secretary Sharifuzzaman Shaifir, and agriculturist Alauddin PK also spoke at the function.

**Partnership formed to offer low-cost healthcare**

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Mohakhali-based Aysha Memorial Specialised Hospital yesterday teamed up with India's second-largest hospital chain, Fortis Healthcare, to facilitate quality health services to people at affordable cost.

Under the partnership, made at a workshop at the city's Sonargaon hotel, Fortis Group will train the doctors and nurses of Aysha Memorial Specialised Hospital, said Priti Chakrabarty, chairman of the specialised hospital.

Set up in 2001, Fortis Group maintains a network of 68 hospitals in seven countries to become the fastest growing hospital chain in India.

Dr Ashok Seth, chairman of cardiology council of Fortis Group of Hospitals, said, "Through the partnership, we will be able to deliver high standard services."

As the chief guest, Prof Dr Syed Modasser Ali, health adviser to the prime minister, said the country's entrepreneurs have to come forward to in the health sector to build better and standard health services.

Prof Dr Pran Gopal Datta, vice chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University; Prof Dr A R Khan, adviser to a caretaker government; Munir Ahmed Khan, managing director of Aysha Memorial Specialised Hospital; Dr Ashis Kumar Chakraborty, its director; and Ahmad-Al-Kabir, chairman of Rupali Bank Ltd, also spoke on the occasion.

**BNP to gear-up movement winning SCBA polls**

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

Aiming to forge a strong anti-government movement soon, the main opposition BNP is going to push all out for winning the upcoming election of Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA).

Party leaders hope court premises would be the centre of the movement if the election results favour them once again.

"The government will have to face tough challenges on issues like constitution amendment and appointment of judges and BNP will side with people to intensify the movement," said a senior leader of the party.

Chairperson Khaleda Zia has asked party high-ups to work for the panel led by Khandaker Mahbub Hossain, also the incumbent SCBA president, party insiders said.

She held several meetings with senior lawyers and leaders to find out a strategy to win the election scheduled for March 30 and 31, they added.

While talking to The Daily Star Mahbub said, "BNP men are being tortured across the

country and it will be good for the party if our panel wins the poll. That is why we are serious about the election."

The SCBA recently staged demonstrations against a few decisions of the chief justice forcing him to meet its demands, noted Mahbub adding, if reelected they would continue this role to ensure rule of law and democracy.

BNP standing committee member Rafiqul Islam Miah said the Bar association will play a vital role to build a democratic society. "Both people and lawyers are disappointed with government's performance which will be reflected in the forthcoming poll."

Rafiqul, also president of pro-BNP lawyers' organisation Jatiyatabadi Ainjibi Forum, noted the Bar association will have to be vocal to realise the demands of the people.

According to party sources, the opposition leader is happy with the performance of the incumbent committee voicing dissent on some crucial issues like Khaleda's former residence in Dhaka cantonment.

**Probe attacks on indigenous people**

Urges CHT commission

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Co-chairs of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Commission requested the government to form a high-level impartial commission to investigate recent attacks on indigenous people by Bangalee settlers in Langadu, Rangamati, Baghaihat and Khagrachhari.

In a statement, they also sought punishment of the attackers as well as those who backed them.

The statement, signed by Eric Avebury, Sultana Kamal and Ida Nicolaisen, expressed deep concern and alleged that the military force repeatedly helped Bangalee settlers carrying out such attacks.

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